

# STATE WATER PLAN 2005 COMMENTS

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Thank you for holding hearings in Eureka. It is good for the rest of California to be aware of where their water comes from.

I have reviewed the Draft Water Plan Update 2005 and have grouped my comments into three sections: I. minor errors, II. future growth and water supply and III. poor people and poor water.

## I. MINOR ERRORS

Vol 3;2-2

No mention is made of dairy industry on the North Coast; 220 dairies with 61,796 cows on about 200,000 acres of irrigated land.

Vol 3;2-3

The Eel River to Russian River transfer began on April 1, 1908. The Eel River transfer went from Cape Horn Dam and Van Arsdale Reservoir via the Potter Valley tunnel to the East Fork of the Russian River. Scott Dam and its reservoir Lake Pillsbury were built 12 miles above Scott Dam in 1922 in order to increase the amount of Eel to Russian River transfer. PG&E acquired the project from the Snow Mountain Water and Power Company in 1930. Coyote Dam and its reservoir Lake Mendocino were built in 1958.

Vol 3;2-4

Grazing has not been found to be a significant contributor to sediment in the TMDLs that have been completed in this region. A quote from the Van Duzen TMDL:

While not part of the sample strategy, PWA personnel had the opportunity to traverse and observe many square miles of range land in the middle basin while locating the randomly selected sample plots. Few if any sites were observed where cattle grazing activities could be linked to measurable volumes of sediment yield to streams within the VDR basin. Consequently, according to the results of this analysis of sediment sources, where over 30 million yards of sediment has been delivered to the VDR, there is no credible evidence to suggest current cattle grazing activities are significant contributors to water quality impacts in the VDR basin.

Vol 3;2-7

20,000 to 50,000 acre feet per year are diverted from the Klamath River to the Rogue River.

## II. FUTURE GROWTH AND WATER SUPPLY

California's population is forecast to increase by 50% to 54.75 million people by 2030. The main emphasis of Plan 2005 is to produce more water by conserving existing supplies. From table 1-1, page 1-10, 8.9 maf are used by 36.5 million people (4.1 people/acre foot.) A 50% increase in population to 54.75 million people by 2030 would require 13.35 maf at the same rate of water usage. By interesting coincidence, the average annual Klamath River flow for 1949 to 2000 was 13,353,848 acre feet.

In 1952 the AhPah dam on the Klamath River was proposed to divert 6,642,700 acre feet from Humboldt County to the Sacramento River and eventually to Southern California. It was assumed it would take 30 years to complete this project. Other dam and diversion projects were proposed for all North Coast Rivers. Water rights for proposed dams are still held by the state and federal governments; Klamath River 27.9 maf, Mad River 1 maf, Trinity River 32.79 maf and Eel River 28.92 maf. The total government held water rights for Humboldt County is 90,610,000 acre feet. A currently functioning dam and diversion on the Trinity River has proven to be a disaster for both the Trinity and Klamath rivers. It would be unwise to sacrifice these other North Coast Rivers for the sake of growth and development of Southern California. No new dams or diversions should be clearly stated in Plan 2005.

Water conservation has become the main focus of Plan 2005. This is a noble goal and should be pursued. However conservation is only good up to a point, and then water must be transferred from either agriculture or environmental uses or the population growth must be controlled. Ultimately the amount of water falling on California plus the amount of water imported from other states will determine the maximum population. Population growth and development must be limited.

The Fresno County grand jury correctly proposed the solution to limited water supplies in their recent report: **Fresno Bee – 6/13/05** "In a sharply worded report, the Fresno County grand jury is recommending "an immediate moratorium" on development in Fresno County and placement of double water meters in all new developments. In the report issued last week, grand jurors said "the rapid growth in Fresno County is a potential disaster." The grand jury wants supervisors to require that developers prove water availability for all future developments."

California needs a state ground water law. Some California counties have a ground water law; most do not. Plan 2005 does not forcefully address the intimate relationship between surface water and ground water supplies. The emphasis on using aquifers for water storage ignores the first portion of the sequence; that the aquifer first has to be drained in order for there to be space to

be filled by water diverted from elsewhere. California state law has not kept up with ground water extraction and transfers.

### **III. POOR PEOPLE AND POOR WATER**

This plan has a great deal of emphasis on water quantity and much less emphasis on water quality. Statewide 1,800,000 people rely on nonpublic water systems. In 2003, 584,696 people received coliform citations. In the North Coast Region of the state, the majority of people rely on surface water, springs or shallow wells for a water supply and septic systems for disposal. As the population increases, more and more people are drinking their uphill neighbor's septic discharge.

In Humboldt County there are a large number of poor people with poor water. The large homeless population often uses public streets as a toilet. Rural subdivisions have over prescribed the available surface and ground water with resultant decreased or absent flows in the South Fork Eel and Matole Rivers. On the Yurok, Hoopa and Karuk reservations water systems are mostly substandard or nonexistent. The Yuroks living along the Klamath River have no running water, no sewer systems, no electricity and no telephones. I am familiar with these situations locally, but I am also sure there are other Californians living in similar extreme poverty. This is not right.

In a state as rich as California, it is unconscionable to have people living without safe water supplies and adequate sewage treatment. If the solution to California's water problems is to put a brick in everyone's toilet, it is important for every Californian to first have a toilet.